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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New commissioner to take helm of state disability department

MONTGOMERY— The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS), which provides services and assistance to Alabamians of all ages with disabilities, has a new commissioner.

Cary Boswell, who retired as the assistant commissioner for the department's Children's Rehabilitation Service division less than three years ago, was appointed by the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services at its quarterly board meeting Feb. 26.

Boswell said he is happy and excited about returning to ADRS .

"I am truly honored. After 31 years of working to provide services for people with disabilities, I really missed it. I missed the people. I missed the department. It didn't take me long to realize that I was not ready to retire," said Boswell, who will begin his tenure as commissioner March 16.

As commissioner, Boswell will oversee a department of 800 employees serving babies, children, teens and adults with disabilities through 33 community-based offices reaching residents in all 67 counties. In fiscal year 2008, the department served some 74,000 Alabamians statewide.

He will be responsible for the department's four major programs – Alabama's Early Intervention System, Children's Rehabilitation Service, Vocational Rehabilitation Service and Homebound/State of Alabama Independent Living (SAIL) Service.

Board member Jimmie Varnado, who represents the Montgomery area, praised Boswell's qualifications and background.

"His experience was the deciding factor," said Varnado. "He was a natural fit. He was someone who was familiar with the department, and the staff is familiar with him. It's like a homecoming for him."

Besides working in the Children's Rehabilitation Service division, Boswell has also worked in the department's Vocational Rehabilitation Service division, serving as the state coordinator of transition from school to work programs and as the coordinator of Supported Employment, which serves people with the most severe disabilities.

Prior to working for the department, Boswell worked as a special education teacher and administrator in Tuscaloosa City Schools. He also worked in the special education division of the State Department of Education before being recruited to work for ADRS .